

Remarks:

Responsive to the Official Action mailed September 28, 2004, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration, reexamination and allowance of claims 24 and 27-32 in view of the following amendments and remarks.

The Examiner has rejected claims 24-30 under 35 USC §112, second paragraph as indefinite. Specifically, the Examiner has indicated that in claim 24, at line 12, it is unclear as to which “mold tool” is being claimed, the internal tool, the external tool or the mold tool in general.

The reference to “mold tool” in claim 24 is to the mold tool in general. If the Examiner would prefer that some language be inserted into this claim to make this clear, it is requested that the Examiner contact the undersigned to discuss such additional language.

Next, the Examiner has rejected claims 24-25 and 27-32 variously as unpatentable over (and/or in view of) Katsumata, U.S. Patent No. 6,012,267, Helms, U.S. Patent No. 3,627,193, WO 98/18609, Hamel, U.S. Patent No. 5,423,670, McCollum et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,971,742, and Voets et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,322,350.

In addition, the Examiner has provisionally rejected claim 26 under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as unpatentable over claims 10-16 of copending U.S. Patent Application serial No. 10/124,968 in view of Katsumata, Helms and WO 98/18609. The noted ‘968 application is commonly owned with the present application

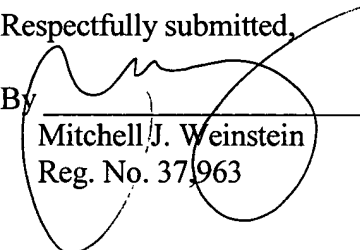
In an effort to move the present application along to allowance, applicant submits with the present Amendment A, a Terminal Disclaimer to disclaim the portion of any term of the present patent that would extend beyond the term of any patent that issues from the ‘968 application.

Applicant has also amended claim 31 to include the elements of claim 26 and likewise submits that claim and the claims depending therefrom are allowable over the art of record.

Please note that the filing date is indicated with an asterisk (\*) as February 24, 2004. Applicant has filed a Petition for a Corrected Filing Receipt requesting a change in the filing date to February 25, 2004, and as such has noted that the filing date on the present Amendment (and the accompanying Terminal Disclaimer) is shown as February 24, 2004 for consistency with PTO records only. Applicant maintains that the actual filing date is in fact February 25, 2004.

In conclusion, Applicant submits that claims 24 and 27-32 are allowable over the art of record and respectfully and earnestly solicits early indication of same. Applicant believes that there is no fee due in connection with the present AMENDMENT A. If, however, there is a fee due, Applicant authorizes the Commissioner to charge any underpayment, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 23-0920. Should any petitions be necessary, applicant requests that this paper constitute any such necessary petition.

If the examiner finds that there are any outstanding issues that may be resolved by a telephone interview, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below listed number.

Respectfully submitted,  
By   
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Dated: December 13, 2004  
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